



Serial No. 10/730,285

Reply to Office Action of November 2, 2006

Docket No. K-0592

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A washing machine, comprising:  
a leakage containment means device for accumulating leaking water; and  
a leakage detection means for detecting detector configured to detect an  
accumulation of leaking water in said the leakage containment means device, wherein the leakage  
detection device comprises a switch activated by a float member when accumulation of leaking  
water in the leakage containment device reaches a predetermined level.
2. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 1, wherein said  
the leakage containment means comprising device comprises a cabinet having a plurality of sides  
and a bottom.
3. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 2, wherein said  
the cabinet is formed by a plurality of connected side panels forming a bottom opening and a  
bottom panel having a perimeter, connected to a bottom edge of each connected side panel, for  
closing the bottom opening formed by the side panels.

4. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 3, wherein each of the plurality connected side panels comprises a bottom flange formed at the bottom edge of each side panel ~~to be bent inward~~.

5. (Original) The washing machine as claimed in claim 4, wherein the perimeter of the bottom panel rests atop the bottom flanges of the side panels and is secured to the side panels.

6. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 5, further comprising a sealing means device configured to seal the bottom panel to the side panels.

7. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 6, wherein said the sealing means comprising device comprises:

a compression means device passing through the perimeter of the bottom panel and the bottom flanges; and

a packing member inserted between the bottom flanges and the bottom panel and compressed by ~~said the compression means device~~.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim [[8,]] 1, wherein ~~said the leakage detection means detector further comprising comprises:~~

a switch support for supporting ~~said the~~ switch at an upper end, connected at a lower end to an inner surface of the bottom of the cabinet, ~~said the~~ support having an interior space of a predetermined height and having at least one perforation allowing water flow from ~~said the leakage containment means device~~ to the interior space of ~~said the~~ switch support; and

a ~~the~~ float member having a predetermined buoyancy, disposed in the interior space of ~~said the~~ switch support such that ~~said the~~ float member is brought into contact with ~~said the~~ switch by floating, to thereby activate ~~said the~~ switch, if the accumulation of leaking water in ~~said the leakage containment means device~~ reaches the predetermined level.

10. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 9, wherein ~~said the~~ switch is a tactile switch having a sensitivity allowing operation by the buoyancy of ~~said the~~ float member.

11. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 9, wherein ~~said the~~ switch support ~~comprising comprises~~ a switch mount for securely positioning ~~said the~~ switch above ~~said the~~ float member.

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12. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 1, ~~wherein said~~  
~~the leakage detection means outputting detector outputs~~ a leakage detection signal if the  
accumulation of leaking water in ~~said the leakage containment means device~~ reaches ~~a the~~  
predetermined level.

13. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 12, further  
comprising:

a main inlet valve for supplying water to a tub; and

a microcomputer, receiving the leakage detection signal from ~~said the leakage~~  
~~detection means detector~~, for outputting at least one control signal to shut off ~~said the~~ main inlet  
valve if the accumulation of leaking water in ~~said the leakage containment means device~~ reaches  
the predetermined level.

14. (Currently Amended) The washing machine as claimed in claim 13, further  
comprising a warning means device, receiving the at least one control signal from ~~said the~~  
microcomputer, for informing the user of the status of the washing machine including an  
indication of the accumulation of leaking water in ~~said the leakage containment means device~~  
reaching the predetermined level.

15. (Currently Amended) A washing machine control method, comprising ~~steps of~~:  
supplying water to a tub;  
determining whether a water leakage condition exists by a leakage detector  
comprising a switch activated by a float member when accumulation of leaking water reaches a  
predetermined level; and  
shutting off the supply of water to the tub, if it is determined that a water leakage  
condition exists.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the supply of water is controlled by a  
main inlet valve.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, further comprising ~~a step of~~  
generating a sensed water leakage signal, if it is determined that a water leakage condition exists.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, further comprising ~~a step of~~  
generating a warning signal, if it is determined that a water leakage condition exists.

19. (New) A washing machine, comprising:  
a leakage containment device configured to accumulate leaking water; and

a leakage detector configured to detect accumulation of leaking water in the leakage containment device, wherein the leaking containment device comprises a cabinet having a plurality of sides and a bottom, wherein the cabinet is formed by a plurality of connected side panels that form a bottom opening and a bottom panel having a perimeter, connected to a bottom edge of each connected side panel, configured to close the bottom opening formed by the side panels, and wherein each of the plurality connected side panels comprises a bottom flange formed at a bottom edge of each side panel bent inward.

20. (New) The washing machine as claimed in claim 19, wherein the perimeter of the bottom panel rests atop the bottom flanges of the side panels and is secured to the side panels.

21. (New) The washing machine as claimed in claim 20, further comprising one or more sealing devices configured to seal the bottom panel to the side panels.

22. (New) The washing machine as claimed in claim 21, wherein the one or more sealing devices comprise:

a compression device passing through the perimeter of the bottom panel and the bottom flanges; and

a packing member inserted between the bottom flanges and the bottom panel and compressed by the compression device.